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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

BOOKS.

EXPLORATIONS IN THE FAR NORTH. By FRANK RUSSELL. Being the report of an expedition under the auspices of the University of Iowa during the years 1892, 1893, and 1894. Published by the University. 1898. Pp. vii, 290.

The immense region lying between Hudson's Bay on the east and the Rocky Mountains on the west, and stretching from the Peace River north to the Arctic, is one of peculiar fascination alike to the scientist and the traveller. The difficulties of travel have, however, been such that few men, other than those connected with government expeditions, have penetrated to the remoter parts. Dr. Russell, in the course of the three years which he spent in the Fur Countries, may therefore be considered fortunate in that he was able to push a considerable distance northeast of the Great Slave Lake, crossing the route followed by Hearne in 1771-72, and nearly reaching Bathurst Inlet. On his return from this extremely arduous trip, the author descended the Mackenzie to its mouth, and returned to San Francisco by one of the Herschel Island fleet of whalers, visiting the Siberian coast on the way.

As Dr. Russell states in his preface, the main object of his trip was "to obtain specimens of the larger Arctic mammals," and, as this was a task requiring the greater part of his time and energies, he was able to collect but little in the way of folk-lore from the tribes belonging to the Athabaskan stock. He does, however, give some details as to distribution and population. From the figures it is evident how extremely thin the Indian population of the region is, and by comparing the figures for previous years, it is evident that no marked change has taken place in their numbers for long periods. Some linguistic material was collected, but except for the names of the months, the numerals, and a few other words, the bulk of this has been reserved by Dr. Russell for further elaboration.

While at Grand Rapids, however, in the autumn and winter of 1892, Dr. Russell collected from the Wood Crees a number of myths, which will be most welcome to students of Algonkian mythology. With few exceptions, the myths are of the common Algonkian type, and vary only in details from those of other northern Algonkian tribes. The stories of how Wisagatchak's brother was turned into a wolf; how he himself secured a wife; how he brought on the Deluge and recreated the earth, — all find their counterparts in the tales of the Ojibwa, Menomeni, etc. Of those stories which deal with the more humorous side of Wisagatchak, most are very close to the same stories told of Nanabojō. He is caught by the tree, and his dinner eaten by an enemy; he captures the water-fowl by strategy while they are dancing; and is pinned to the earth by the rock with which he runs a race. In the first of the myths given (the familiar story of the woman and her serpent lovers), the ending differs considerably from the two versions given by Petitot (and called by him "mixed Dene and Cree")

in that we have the incident of the "Magic Flight." This, if not traceable to the influence of the French Canadian voyageurs, will add another to the list of "stations" at which this very interesting story-incident is found.

The major part of Dr. Russell's book is taken up by the journal of his experiences during the period of his northern trip, and as a record of travel will be found most entertaining. He has been successful in securing for his university a large and valuable collection of Arctic fauna, and a considerable mass of ethnological specimens illustrating the life and customs of the natives. Should he make a second journey to the north, as he declares is his intention, it is to be hoped that he will bring to the folk-lorist a harvest equally great.

Roland B. Dixon.

THE HOME OF THE EDDIC POEMS, WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE HELGI-LAYS, by SOPHUS BUGGE. With a new Introduction concerning Old Norse Mythology, by the author. Translated from the Norwegian by William Henry Schofield. London: D. Nutt. 1899. Pp. lxxix, 408.

The volume which bears this title is a translation of Professor Bugge's "*Helge-Digtene i den Ældre Edda, Deres Hjem og Forbindelser*," which appeared in 1896. The Norwegian original formed the second series of Bugge's "*Studier over de Nordiske Gude- og Heltesagns Oprindelse*," of which the first series was published at Christiania in 1881-89; the earlier volume was translated into German by Professor O. Brenner under the title, "*Studien über die Entstehung der Nordischen Götter- und Heldensagen*" (Munich, 1889), and now Dr. Schofield has made the second series accessible to the larger European public by preparing an English translation of it. Dr. Schofield's volume contains, in addition to the treatise on the Helgi-lays, a new introduction on Old Norse Mythology, written by Bugge especially for the English edition.

Professor Bugge is the chief exponent of the theory formerly held, though very slightly worked out, by Vigfusson, that the poems of the elder Edda were composed in a large part in the British Isles, and show in both style and subject-matter the influence of the foreign literatures with which the Scandinavian poets came in contact. In the first series of his "*Studier*" he investigated the myths of Baldr and of the hanging of Odin, and traced their origin largely to Christian and classical tradition. In the new Introduction to the English volume he recapitulates in part the conclusions of his earlier book, and extends the same method of inquiry to other myths and traditions. He once more draws in detail the parallels between the life of Christ and the story of Baldr; he attempts to find the origin of Loki's name, and of many of his characteristics in Lucifer (understood by Scandinavians as *Luci fur*); he derives the wolf Fenrir from *infernus lupus* by a process of popular etymology; and he sees the prototype of the Mithgarthsorm in the Leviathan of the Scriptures. To prepare the way for these identifications, he attempts to show on various grounds that most of the Eddic poems were written in the British Isles by poets who were familiar